

Global Call to Action to Address Technology-facilitated Gender-based Violence



“There is a critical need to support specific and actionable solutions today to address technology-facilitated gender-based violence which undermines human rights and threatens democracy. We need tangible and practical interventions to ensure that every woman in every space is safe.”

- Stephanie Copus-Campbell, Australia’s Ambassador for Gender Equality

This Global Call to Action aims to translate the insights, partnerships, and initiatives conceptualised into tangible interventions, guided by our shared commitment to address technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TF GBV).¹

The present Global Call to Action reflects the collective insights, ideas and expertise shared during a Roundtable on TF GBV organised alongside the 68th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The Roundtable brought together diverse stakeholders from inter-governmental organisations, government agencies, civil society, gender policy specialists, tech sector, researchers and academics. It calls for cross-sector collaboration to advance five key action areas: (1) Response Mechanisms; (2) Safety, Security, and Privacy by Design and Inclusion; (3) Prevention; (4) Funding Mechanisms; and (5) Partnerships and Collaboration. All elements of the Global Call to Action are intended to adhere to the overarching principles to TF GBV Programming.

¹ Technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TF GBV) is any act that is committed, assisted, aggravated, or amplified by the use of information communication technologies or other digital tools, that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological, social, political, or economic harm, or other infringements of rights and freedoms.

Global Call to Action

We call on all stakeholders across governments, private sector, United Nations, civil society, philanthropy, and academia to proactively engage in the realisation of this Global Call to Action. Achieving these goals requires commitment to the action areas outlined next. Solutions to address TF GBV must be multilayered, intersectional and promote systemic change, which will be incremental. The present Call to Action establishes goals considering three distinct milestones:

- immediate action (within **one year**)
- short term (within **three years**)
- medium term (within **five years**)

Overarching principles to TF GBV programming²

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be human-rights based ● Doing no harm ● Victim/survivor-centred and participatory solutions ● Leaving no one behind / addressing intersectionality ● Language and context inclusivity ● Monitoring, evaluation, and learning frameworks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multi-stakeholder Partnerships³ ● Protection, safety, and security of advocates and victims/survivors ● Investment in internal organisational capacity ● Streamlined coordination systems and structures ● Have a gender-transformative approach |
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² These overarching principles to TF GBV programming have been identified within the Evaluation Framework and form the foundation of our Call to Action.

³ In this document, multi-stakeholder partnerships refer to collaborative work between governments, regulators, tech companies, civil society organisations (CSOs), academia, women’s rights organisations, digital rights organisations, activists, human rights defenders, technologists, GBV experts.

1. Response mechanisms

TF GBV affects women and girls in all their diversity. Victims/survivors of TF GBV require immediate access to quality support services that are trauma-informed, gender-transformative and victim/survivor-centred, and respond to the unique needs of women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. We call for committed efforts to achieve the following goals:

Within one year⁴:

- Advocate for an increase in the development of **laws and policies** to respond to TF GBV, including considering options beyond criminalization and punitive measures.
- Strengthen **accountability mechanisms** through laws, policies, and independent bodies.
- Provide model frameworks for **redress and reparation** to TF GBV victims/survivors.
- **Strengthen coordination** of response mechanisms across all stakeholders.
- Strengthen **TF GBV in existing GBV** case management systems and programming, particularly through capacity building and response tools integration.
- Ensure that all **data is protected** and that survivors or groups of survivors cannot be identified without their consent when developing TF GBV response mechanisms.
- Increase **awareness** of existing resources to support victims/survivors of TF GBV.
- Ensure that tech companies make accessible and understandable options regarding **content removal**, user suspension and other safety issues.

Within three years:

- Consolidate **TF GBV in existing GBV** case management systems and programming.
- Design, draft, enforce, and strengthen legal and **accountability mechanisms** through laws, policies, and independent bodies.
- Pilot or use existing **safe and ethical tech to support victim/survivors** and ensure all data use is verified to be safe and secure for women and girls.

Within five years:

- Scale up widespread **adaptation and implementation of case management systems** and TF GBV programming response.
- Strengthen cross-border **coordination** and action for all stakeholders to respond to TF GBV.
- Strengthen and evaluate **accountability mechanisms** through building **capacity of legal and security actors** in charge of TF GBV legal processes and ensuring implementation and measurement of **laws and policies** that address TF GBV.
- Create **funding mechanisms** that address TF GBV and tech safety at both national and local levels.
- Develop appropriate **indicators** to monitor success of adopted measures.

⁴ The goals proposed within year one are expected to continue to be met for the next three and five years, and beyond.

2. Safety, Security, and Privacy by Design and Inclusion

Addressing TF GBV effectively requires technological, digital, and online platforms, services, and products that, by design, promote the safety, security, and privacy of women and girls, in all their diversity. We call for committed efforts to achieve the following goals:

Within one year:

- Develop **norms and standards** around Safety, Security, and Privacy by Design Principles measures, within technology, both at technical and organisational levels, aimed at risk assessment and minimising threats to women in all their diversity, including their freedom online, data protection, and privacy.
- Develop structured and coordinated **frameworks** that can assist in identifying harms to women and girls as a result of technology.
- Study the **intersection of user verification and anonymity online** to identify opportunities and limitations.
- **Strengthen partnerships** between survivor advocates, women’s rights organisations, digital rights, privacy specialists, and tech companies to bring in the voices of diverse women.
- Encourage, develop, and map **tech and data use** that follows safe and ethical **best practices** for the safety and empowerment of women and girls.
- Advocate for accountability and **transparency** of technology companies’ internal decision making processes about their products, services, and particularly their TF GBV case response.

Within three years:

- **Collectively** develop strong data protection and privacy law **frameworks** that protect women and girls online and offline.
- Establish tools and resources for implementing **Safety, Security, and Privacy by Design Principles** that can be easily applied to technology products.
- **Fund local and global groups** to advocate for the implementation of Safety, Security, and Privacy by Design Principles.
- Strengthen tech industry **standards and government laws and policies** on TF GBV by conducting gender analysis of impact assessments to inform an evidence base.
- Increase **coordination** with the technology industry to develop gender and **TF GBV training** for software engineers, data scientists, technical product managers, and user-experience designers.

Within five years:

- Increase **accountability** by establishing mandated **Safety, Security, and Privacy by Design Principles** tech industry standards that can be monitored, as well as enforced with financial penalties for companies.
- Develop **funding mechanisms** for TF GBV programming through negative externality taxes and fines.
- Develop an environment within the **tech industry where women feel welcome** and safe, particularly within engineering, design, and technical product management, with access to promotions, decision-making, and opportunities for funding their products and ideas.

3. Prevention

Preventive action is a vital component to effective global efforts against TF GBV, and the ultimate form in which it can be eradicated. We call for committed efforts to achieve the following goals:

Within one year:

- **Strengthen existing GBV prevention programmes** by including digital literacy and pilot innovative TF GBV prevention programmes with robust evaluation frameworks.
- Commit to **coordination** with open, ongoing knowledge exchange and adaptive strategies to stay effective and safe in the evolving landscapes of technology and GBV.
- Commit to multi-year **investments** in TF GBV prevention strategies, with earmarked resources for evaluation, innovation, and adaptation.
- Work towards the closing of the **gender digital divide** recognising the differentiated impact that ICT have in the lives of women and girls, in all their diversity.⁵

Within three years:

- Work with feminist, digital rights CSOs, and survivor advocates to shape the ecosystem of national and international **regulations to increase accountability**, including through gender equality mechanisms and observatories.
- Evaluate and invest in adapting and scaling up **GBV and TF GBV prevention programmes** with best and promising results for gender transformative impacts, including related to social norms.
- Build on existing TF GBV **research** to close key knowledge and context gaps to inform evidence-driven prevention policies and programming.
- Develop and implement **social norms** programming, such as existing Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) for safe and healthy online interactions.

Within five years:

- Explore and **research** alternative business models for technology that minimise harm potential and reevaluate engagement driven and content-neutral approaches that are shaped by behaviours.
- Integrate digital literacy training and positive **social norms** training for safe and respectful relationships into **formal educational curricula**, with relevant age and cultural adaptations.

⁵ According to the ITU there are four main issues when addressing the gender digital divide: 1) a gap in access to and use of the internet, 2) a gap in digital skills and the use of digital tools, 3) a participation gap in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, and 4) a gap in leadership in public decision-making spaces in technology and entrepreneurship in the technology sector.

4. Funding Mechanisms:

Initiatives to prevent and counter TF GBV require funding that prioritises projects with intersectional, decolonial, and gender-transformative perspectives. We call for committed efforts to achieve the following goals:

Within one year:

- Establish the TF GBV **Civil Society Fund** to be incubated within the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-based Online Harassment and Abuse.
 - Adapt existing partnerships to develop a consortium of partners who will conceptualise, develop, and operationalize the TF GBV Civil Society Fund.
 - Conceptualise the strategy for the Civil Society Fund which will focus on: Research, Prevention, and Response.
 - Identify ambassadors who will bring attention to the Civil Society Fund.
 - Launch consortium and strategy for the Civil Society Fund in Q3 of 2024.
 - Host a roundtable discussion at UNGA – September 2024.
- **Build partnerships** with diverse stakeholders while mapping funding needs, gaps, and opportunities.
 - Increase engagement with tech companies of various sizes and along the chain.
 - Map and attend tech conferences to build a mutual understanding of the issue and peak tech companies interest in the topic.
 - Explore opportunities to ensure consistency in government funding, regardless of change in administration.
 - Identify private sector funders.

Within three years:

- Roll out and operationalize the **TF GBV Civil Society Fund**, and set up feedback loops to ensure real-time knowledge sharing.
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 - Set up feedback loops to ensure real-time knowledge sharing.
- **Build partnership and coordination** across regions to ensure consistent government funding, and develop a shared value proposition for private sector stakeholders.
 - Strengthen partnerships among regions.
 - Implement a plan to ensure consistency in government funding, regardless of change in administration.

Within five years:

- Strengthen **multi-sector funding mechanisms** for TF GBV prevention and response.
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- Increase the inclusion of **diverse voices** and invest to advance research and programming in under-represented regions and contexts.

5. Partnerships and Collaboration

Measures against TF GBV require a multi-layer coordination that is global, regional, and national, as well as inter-sector and multi-actor, to be effective. Only through partnerships and collaborations will such coordination be successful in shaping a world where women in all their diversity can fully exercise their rights and freedoms in participating in the digital realm. We call for committed efforts to achieve the following goals:

Within one year:

- Amplify **diverse voices** with feminist, GBV, digital rights civil society, and grassroots organisations to ensure their concerns and needs regarding TF GBV are brought to state and international priorities.
- Identify **current multi-sectoral partnerships**, networks, and movements that address issues around TF GBV, and **promote their formation** where they are missing.
- Create **infrastructure** for transparency, safe, and ethical **data sharing and knowledge management** among actors working on TF GBV
- Strengthen **knowledge management** and consolidate information about promising practices to address TF GBV among Global Partnership members to be shared widely.
- Take steps to make **information accessible** and multilingual, and support widespread awareness of the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse.

Within three years:

- Strengthen **existing collaborations**, such as the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse, The Action Coalitions on Gender-Based Violence and Technology and Innovation, and other networks led by Civil Society Organizations, and support **cross-coalition/network coordination**.
- Promote **funding and spaces for knowledge exchange and innovation** among CSOs and grassroots organisations to amplify **diverse voices**.
- **Research**, explore needs, facilitate discussions and find solutions to face **emerging challenges** around the work to prevent, combat, and eradicate TF GBV, including anti-gender movements.
- Advocate for **multi-stakeholder awareness campaigns** of TF GBV globally.

Within five years:

- Establish clear, **coordinated mechanisms** across Government, Private Sector, and Philanthropic Foundations for streamlined and complementary programming.
- Collectively build upon existing TF GBV **research** and bridge gaps in evidence, particularly in underrepresented regions and contexts.
- **Advocate** for global partnerships and networks to **equally include non-governmental stakeholders**, particularly civil society, within the decision making groups.
- Facilitate **knowledge management** through multi-level sharing of skills, lessons, resources, and best practices among actors working against TF GBV across world regions.